

**Community Development Block Grant Public Hearing
Pre-Proposal Informational Meeting**

Gloucester Lyceum Sawyer Free Library, Friend Room - 2 Dale Avenue Gloucester, MA
February 14, 2013, 4:00 p.m.

Staff Present:

Tom Daniel, Director of Community Development
Gregg Cademartori, Planning Director
Debbie Laurie, Senior Project Manager

Consultants Present:

Dan Cahill
Kathleen Perreault

Public Present:

Debbie Adkins, Harvard
Susanne Altenburger, Phil Bolger & Friends Inc
Jessie Ballantine, HAWC
Tom Bentley, Grace Center Inc.
David Brooks, Cape Ann Art Haven
Shari Cornett, Action Inc.
Damon Cummings, Citizens for Gloucester Harbor
Kathy Erkkila, Gloucester Housing Authority
Louise Fatta, Cape Ann Interfaith Homes Fund
Carmine Gorga, Gloucester EDE

Sarah Grow, The Open Door
Holly Tanguay, UU Church
Paul McGeary, Gloucester City Council
Valerie Nelson, Maritime Working Group
Susan Oleksiw, North Shore Health Project
Maggie Rosa, City Hall Restoration Committee
Alice Sheriden, Gloucester Housing Authority
Martha Swanson, RNAC Rocky Neck Art Colony
Maud Warren, Cape Ann Interfaith Homes Fund
Jen Wright, Action Inc.

At 4:05 p.m. Dan Cahill began the public hearing by introducing himself, Kathleen Perreault and City staff. Mr. Cahill and Ms. Perreault gave a brief presentation on the Annual Action Plan process as well as the other core strategic documents (Consolidated Plan and Consolidated Annual Performance and Evaluation Report) required by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. The presentation covered Gloucester's expected CDBG allocation in the upcoming program year, the City's CDBG target neighborhoods, eligible projects by program area, the performance measure component of the CDBG application and the upcoming timeline for the Annual Action Plan. After the presentation, the public was invited to ask questions.

Susan Olshen from the North Shore Health Project asked about the expenditure deadline for CDBG grant recipients. Debbie Laurie, Senior Project Manager for the Grants Division, clarified that while CDBG funds may not become available to the City until October, general revenue is used to "float" the public service awards, and these contracts are signed in July. Therefore, the funds are expected to be expended by May.

Jen Wright, from Action Inc. wondered about the estimated amount of funding for each public service application. Ms. Laurie responded that historically applications are funded between the amount of \$4,000 and \$20,000.

A discussion about establishing project performance measures took place. Tom Bentley from Grace Center Inc. works with a population of people with disabilities (e.g. alcohol and drug addictions). He was considering proposing multiple outcomes in his CDBG application in order to capture the range of clients served by his organization. In addition, he voiced concerns about developing an outcome(s) that would be meaningful enough for HUD. For example, the program's ability to place clients into treatment would be a more realistic output than helping these individuals secure a job. Ms. Laurie emphasized that simplifying the performance measures approach by creating one outcome would make it easier for the Grace Center staff to measure that outcome and offer a better chance at achieving it. Mr. Cahill added that the Grace Center's assessment tool referenced by Mr. Bentley will be helpful in creating outcomes.

Valerie Nelson from the Maritime Working Group asked if the maritime economic development was still a priority under the CDBG program and whether or not resources will continue to be devoted to these types of programs. Mr. Cahill indicated that this area is still a priority for the City and Sarah Garcia, Harbor Planning Director, is the staff person to contact about potential maritime projects.

Susanne Altenburger of Phil Bolger & Friends Inc. shared her experience working on a CDBG funded boat project that also received funds from the Navy and the State of Massachusetts. She indicated a couple of lessons learned including using CDBG funds to leverage other financial support and establishing regular project meetings with key partners to offer a consistent flow of project information.

Shari Cornett from Action Inc. stated that Action Inc. works with recently unemployed Gloucester residents to help them secure benefits and a job. Although these individuals may not be income eligible under the CDBG program, she wondered if they could comprise the 49 percent of non-income eligible project participants. Ms. Laurie responded that yes, while 51% of project/program clientele needs to meet the income eligibility requirements of the CDBG program, the other 49 percent of clients can be above these income limits.

David Brooks from Cape Ann Art Haven had several questions about applying for an eligible CDBG project. The Art Haven previously received CDBG funds for an art scholarship program which documented each income eligible client. Mr. Brooks wondered if the area benefit approach could be used to qualify project participants because of the Art Haven's location in a target neighborhood. Ms. Laurie responded that if the Art Haven chooses to use the area benefit national objective to qualify clients, the organization's staff would need to document the home addresses of program participants. Mr. Brooks was considering a variety of programs for the Art Haven's CDBG application, including adult art scholarships, youth art scholarships and program support for the non-profits that share space in the Art Haven. Ms. Laurie and Mr. Cahill encouraged Mr. Brooks to focus the Art Haven's application on one program element, which would cut down the staff's CDBG reporting obligations. For example, funding programmatic support to a range of non-profits may present a reporting burden as each non-profit must meet the CDBG requirements even if the funding they receive is a small portion of the Art Haven's overall grant.

A member of the public asked if the Stage Fort was included in the City's income-eligible neighborhoods. Ms. Laurie responded that the Fort was part of a CDBG target area.

Sarah Grow from The Open Door asked if there would be a difference between this year and last year in terms of the CDBG application review process. Mr. Cahill responded that with the exception of the change in schedule, with proposals due March 7, the process would remain the same.

Susan Oleksiw from the North Shore Health Project (NSHP) mentioned that, although the organization did not apply for funding last year, NSHP has been funded in the past. She wondered if previously funded organizations would be at a disadvantage in the application process. Mr. Cahill responded that these organizations would only be at a disadvantage if there was a past performance issue with their CDBG grant.

Mr. Cahill thanked everyone for attending the public hearing.

The public hearing was closed at 5:15 p.m.